

A
 Concise View
 Of the Rise, Progress, Improvement And
 Present State Of
 Medicine.

By Chandler Redfield

Of
 Pennsylvania.

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1. The first thing I noticed
when I stepped out of the
train was the cold air.
It was a relief after the
heat of the city.

2. The second thing I noticed
was the smell of the
city. It was a mix of
old and new, of
history and modernity.

3. The third thing I noticed
was the sound of the
city. It was a mix of
silence and noise, of
peace and chaos.

4. The fourth thing I noticed
was the sight of the
city. It was a mix of
old and new, of
history and modernity.

Introduction.

By the word *Physic*, was formerly understood, Natural Philosophy. It has since been *improperly* employed to denote *Medendi Scientia*, *Arts Medicinalis*, or the Science of Medicine. A knowledge of this science, presupposes an intimate acquaintance with the laws of the animal economy, both in health and disease, or of *Physiology* *Pathology*, *Materia Medica*, and *Therapeutics*.

As constituting a branch of medicine, surgery might, very justly, be included.

Chirurgia, is derived from the Greek *χey*, the hand, and *eyen*, work. To a superficial mind, it would appear from this etymology, that surgery is only a mechanical art. But his ideas must be very contracted, and illiberal, who considers it as consisting in manual dexterity, &c. By what mechanical operations, or manual skill, does the surgeon cure fever, erysipelas, or the venereal disease? He is not a surgeon who has merely acquired

as in some recent dialyses, or ectopia, where it is only necessary to replace the parts and retain them in situ, to ensure a speedy union, or restitution: no force is attending

I am not less boasting that the business of the surgeon is exclusively the treatment of disease. It certainly is not, for he is most frequently employed in the management of accidental injuries. But the treatment of some diseases particularly appertains to the surgeon, and all those which supervene accidental injuries.

the art of dressing a wound, applying a bandage, tying up an artery, or extirpating a tumour; but he who knows the structure, action, and functions, of the human body, the several changes it may undergo, and the several powers by which it can be changed; qualifications equally necessary, both for the surgeon, and the physician.

If these remarks be just, physic and surgery, though sometimes disunited, yet their theory, and general principles, are so indivisible, that they, in fact, really constitute, one, and the same science. What the ~~physician~~ cannot cure, he applies to the surgeon to remove. The former cures whatever diseases his remedies and skill enable him to cure, and palliates the rest. The latter cures whatever diseases will admit of a remedy; removes whatever diseased parts cannot be cured, and will admit of removing; and palliates those diseases, which can neither be cured nor removed. Both the physician and the surgeon, accomplish these indications, by those means which change the state of the system, or by those which excite, and keep up an action, incompatible with the

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disease, or morbid action, and one that has a tendency to
terminate in health.

Having shown the intimate connection between
physic and surgery, I proceed to give some account of their
rise, progress, improvement, and present state.

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(Of the Rise and Progress of Physic.)

It is highly rational to suppose, that our science took its origin, at a period not far remote, from that of disease itself. The sight of a fellow being in distress, borne down by the weight of disease, and a desire of lessening human misery, by human means, prompted some one, to search for a remedy, suited to the object in view. But for whatever was known on the subject of physic before the invention of letters, and the cultivation of the arts and sciences generally, we must forever remain ignorant. The most ancient histories with which we are acquainted, as though the events to be related were of more abundant importance to mankind, scarcely hint at the subject of medicine.

It has been questioned whether Moses, the emancipator and law-giver of the Israelites, had ever entered into the sacred arana of Apollo? But it can scarcely be doubted that he was not familiarly acquainted with whatever was known on the subject of medicine, ^{in his time,} as he was brought up among the most enlightened of the age and in-

• Butler's Anal. Med.

taught in all the learning of Egypt. But it is remarkable that he mentions no other diseases in the Pentateuch, but *leprosy*, *gonorrhoea* and *gonorrhoea*, nor any remedies for these, but those of a prophylactic nature, better calculated to prevent their spreading, than to effect their cure.

"The first distinct accounts of the art of physic, as conveyed by a particular class of men, are those we have of it in Greece, among the priests of Aesculapius. The temples of Aesculapius were, probably, the first schools of the art, the first writings upon it were produced here, and from these originated the first clinical practitioners."

Of these was Hippocrates, who has, emphatically, and perhaps justly, been styled, the Father of Medicine. It is in his writings that we must look for what was then, and for what had previously, been known upon the subject of physic. Possessed of a mind truly great and good, of a genius splendid and illustrious, and of an education every way adequate to the purpose,

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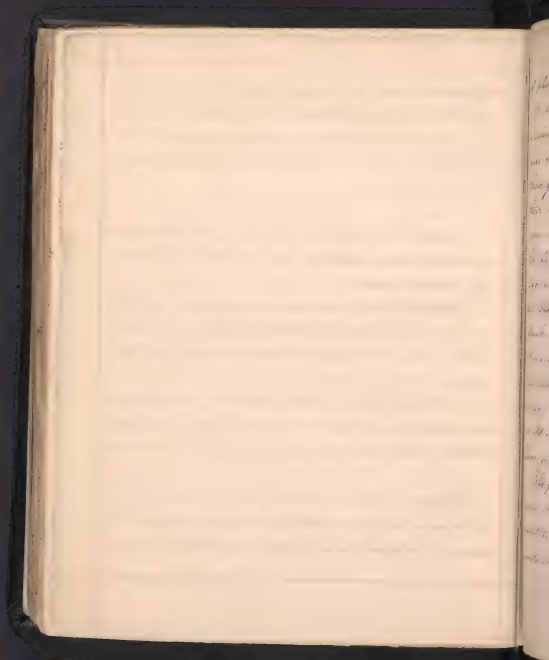
Hippocrates, more than any man before his time, contributed to the advancement of the medical science, by his quick discernment, and correct observation of diseases; and by his persevering, and indefatigable attention to their phenomena.

Aristotle and Theophrastus, by laying the foundation of natural history, helped to improve the knowledge of the materia medica.

Herophilus the Anatomist, who held a distinguished rank among the Greek physicians, was none of the least active in his endeavours to discover remedies suited to the cure of such diseases as then prevailed.

Whether Philinus of Cos, the pupil of Herophilus, and Serapion reported founders of the Empiric sect, contributed to the improvement of physic, is not known.

In Rome, physic might early have been expected to make rapid advances. But this we find was not the case. For, though this city afterwards became the seat,



of physicians, poets, philosophers, orators and statesmen.
Long after its foundation it was the asylum of criminals and vagabonds, a rude, licentious and uncivilized race of men, more addicted to arms, than to arts. Their greatest concern was, to people their cities, extend their conquests, and heighten their triumphs, in successive victories, fearing to encourage the cultivation of the fine arts, lest it should tend to ease their ardour for war, and quench their thirst, for rapine and slaughter. The practice, for a long time, was in the hands of Greek physicians, who established themselves at Rome.

Among the number who flourished here, none of the least celebrated was, Hippocrates. But it is said his theory was so profound, that few of his contemporaries could understand it; which difficulty is supposed to have given rise, to the Methodic sect.

The famous Celsus was, perhaps, the only native Roman who ever became distinguished in medicine. A great deal more occurs in his writings, relating to the *materia medica*, wherein his judgment and sapa-

* The *Theraca Andromachi* varietal form is a specimen of the

- cally, are obvious, than in those of any former author.

His errors are hardly to be mentioned, when we take into consideration the difficulties he laboured under. But the study of persons, and antidotes, now became fashionable, and is said to have engrossed great part of the time of Philocean, as well as that of his contemporaries, and immediate successors.

What now seemed, in a great measure, to retard the progress, and depress the practitioners, of medicine, was that ungenerous selfishness of keeping medicines secret, that un-
 disinterested assurance of composition from a deficient knowledge of chemistry, and the many superstitious follies which occurred with respect to these remedies.

Diocorides, and Pliny senior, wrote pretty copiously on the materia medica; but the student seldom peruses their works, at this enlightened period, with a view of gaining medical information.

Soon after these, he visited Galen. His ideas of disease, and the operation of medicines, were so manifestly peculiar.

* observing, that the day on which Constantinople was taken by Mahomet
the great, may be called the birth-day of learning to the western part of Europe,
from the number of learned Greeks, which on that occasion retired to Italy.

He contends that the effects of medicines depend principally upon their general qualities of heat and cold, moisture and dryness. However absurd Galen's theory might have been, it was embraced with avidity and implicitly followed, for nearly fifteen hundred years, by all the physicians of Greece, which came after Galen, and by all those of Asia, Europe, and Africa. This was probably owing to the subversion of the western part of the Roman empire by the Goths, Vandals, Huns and other Barbarians, and the destruction of the Alexandrian library, and every monument of learning and taste, which put a stop to the cultivation of literature, and even occasioned to make any farther improvement in medicine.

It was not till the taking of Constantinople, and the entire overthrow of the Roman empire, in 1453, and the ruin of the language and literature of the Greeks, in the west of Europe, that the doctrines of Galen, here, became thoroughly known. Though triumphant for a time, they were doomed, at last, to fall under the formidable attack of the chemists, early in the sixteenth century.

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At the head of these, was the eccentric, and enthusiastic, Paracelsus.

During the Alchemical age, some acquisitions to the materia medica took place. "Vehement exertions however employed, are seldom wholly unproductive". For some of our most powerful remedies we are indebted to the discoveries of the Alchemists, broken in search of the philosopher's stone, and the immortal elixir their efforts never ceased, their fires never went out, but all nature groined beneath their transmutating instruments.

The discovery of the circulation of the blood, we should suppose, would have been attended with considerable reformation and improvement of medicine. This, however, was not immediately realized. Not aware that the laws which govern *papiae*, and *inanimate* matter, are entirely different from those which govern living matter, the animal system was looked upon as a mere hydraulic machine, and the preservation of health was supposed to depend entirely on the freedom of the circulation, and on the quantity, and quality, of the fluids.



and disease was imputed to a loss of equilibrium between the solids and fluids, and an interrupted, or disordered circulation.

"In every age," says an elegant writer, "medicine has been corrupted by the ambition to apply to it the general theories, or particular views of the other sciences. Its early history shows, that it was constantly subjected to the dominant philosophy of authority. When chemistry first entered, we have seen its reasonings interwoven with every set of opinions, and shaping every form of practice. That mathematics came into vogue, and the functions of the living system, as well as the operations of medicines, were explained on pure geometrical principles. After a while, however, the reign of metaphysics ensuing, we had all its subtleties and abstractions in the place of the preceding parade of data, postulates, and demonstrations.

"Thus stood our science, at the dawn of the eighteenth century, when three distinguished characters arose, to subvert the authority of their predecessors, and to share among them the empire of medicine. These were Stahl

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Boerhaave and Hoffmann. How far their several systems tended to improve the science of medicine I will not now undertake to determine.

It is here to be observed that in proportion to the establishment of medical schools in Europe, the cultivation of anatomy, physiology and botany, has the practice of physic and surgery been improved, and the materia medica enlarged.

I mention the names of the illustrious characters which have been engaged in these important pursuits, mankind will esteem. They are respected by every student of medicine, and by every lover of science.

The European writers on the materia medica of a recent date, and those best entitled to our notice, are Murray of Göttingen, Lewis, Cullen, and Dr. Ferrius of Edinburgh.

But how pleasing is the thought, that I have arrived at that period in this detail, when I can mention the flight of medical science to the shores of Columbia the asylum of the oppressed, the safe retreat from the barbed shafts of tyranny, where the fastening hand of freedom

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guides her sons into every noble pursuit, uncontrolled by the government, the doctrines, and prejudices of the old world.

Carr did the writers on natural history in America, lay the foundation for a materia-medica, by their botanic, and sometimes by their medical description, of our numerous plants. "But the credit of leading in this new career, is deservedly due to the late professor Barton of this University. Confessedly it was by him that a real taste for the natural sciences was created and diffused in the United States, the charms and utility of which were sagaciously and eloquently enforced in his lectures, in his conversation, and by his writings." But how has the ingenuity, the labour, and the perseverance, of the numerous graduates in our different medical schools, been displayed, in investigating the medical properties of American plants! There is a noble display of talents which cannot be too much admired, nor too much encouraged.

The first treatise on the American materia-medica was, a paper entitled *Specimen Canadense*. (Vide *Annuaire Académique* Vol. IV. *Dysertatio*, 72.)

* *Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through from the reverse side. The text appears to be a list or a series of notes, possibly related to a medical or scientific study.*

The next was that of Dr. J. G. Shoop of Erlangen, Germany, under the title of *Materia Medica Americana Plantarum Regini Vegetabilis*. 1837.

The learned author of this work, arranges the medicinal actions which he describes, according to the sexual system of Linnaeus. Though he did not always judge of their virtues from his own experience, and was sometimes too credulous of their reputed qualities, yet it answered a valuable purpose in directing the attention of physicians to the examination of our indigenous articles of medicine.

Soon after this appeared the "Collections for an Essay towards a Materia Medica of the United States," by R. D. Barton, M.D. Professor of Materia Medica, Natural History, and Botany, in the University of Pennsylvania. This little work aroused the spirit of investigation and added vigour to the exertions of country practitioners and medical students throughout the United States. It is surprising to observe what the learning, the genius and the well directed endeavours of one man, can accomplish. "Too early," has he been removed from the sphere of

The first of the two is the "Journal of the
 Proceedings of the Legislature of the State of New York
 for the year 1844." It is a large volume, and contains
 the proceedings of the Legislature from the 1st of January
 to the 1st of January, 1845. It is a very valuable
 work, and is one of the most important of the
 publications of the State. It is a very large volume,
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 information. It is a very valuable work, and is one
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his labours, and the world deprived of his discoveries and improvements. Emulating, however, his example, those who have succeeded him in the school, in the several departments of the materia medica, natural history, and botany, seem resolute to repair his loss by pursuing the same arduous path of duty and usefulness:

It is by American physicians, especially the different professors in the University of Pennsylvania, that the most important improvements have been made, in the practice of physic. Persuaded that the diseases of the new world, like its productions, animal and vegetable, its rivers, lakes, and mountains, have forms more gigantic than those of the old, and aware that "American diseases ^{can} hardly be cured by strictly following the directions of European books," they laboured to disentangle themselves from the false theories and insinuations of their predecessors, and to confine themselves to the phenomena of disease, and to the state of the system. Some of the illustrious characters who have contributed largely to the reformation of physic in the United States are

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no more. But, their memories shall live in the hearts of
all who had the honour of knowing them personally,
of hearing their lectures, or of reading their works.

Others, engaged in the same cause, survive to complete
their labours, and to receive the honours of their coun-
try.)

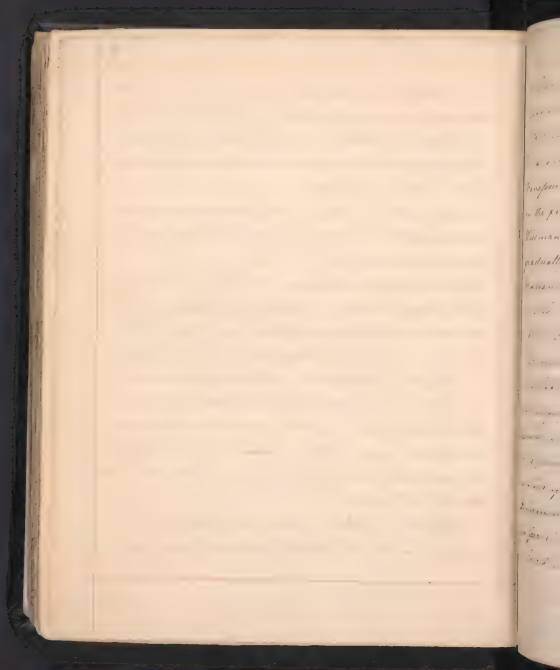
"Homer's Iliad Book 11.

17 The Rise and Progress of Surgery

Surgery, as a branch of medical science, can no doubt be
traced of great antiquity. It is a science which has been
practised from the earliest times, and is now more
advanced than ever before. The progress of surgery is
due to the progress of the human mind, and to the
improvements in the art of dissection, and to the
discovery of the nature of the various parts of the
body, and to the discovery of the nature of the
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It has long been noted, in the thirteenth century, the
operation of surgery was commenced in France by
Gaston, Count of Toulouse, and soon after in England, by
a succession of men of genius and learning such as
Ranpierre, Mandeville, Guille de Caltrave, Paris, Guillemaure,
in the former, and such as Gale, Glaucos, Woodall, Banister,
Wiseman and others, in the latter Kingdom, surgery was
gradually advanced. Other authors are mentioned as
Marianus Sanctus, (Marcus Aurelius Severinus, Roman
and Aquapendente, La Bat, Rouen the illustrious
H. de La Popponie &c.

It was not necessary until the discovery of the circulation
of blood and the discovery of a greater vessel & knowledge
that surgery was almost useless & proper for nothing, and
remained a steady pain. For the last century, it has been making
great progress, but it is remarkable how long the surgical sciences
remained ignorant of the treatment of certain vascular cases.
For example: when a man was slain, or never reflected
on far of a fatal hemorrhage. Mr. John Bell observes, that
the old surgeons ventured to amputate a limb they only

did so, when it had mortified, by dividing the dead parts; and
 the great was their apprehension of bleeding, that they were da-
 id to cut into vessels could no longer bleed. And no wonder,
 for they knew no means of stopping the hemorrhage.
 even in the case of hemorrhage from a wound, to prevent
 a man from bleeding to death recommends it to be filled with
 dry lint, on which a sponge dipped in cold water is to be laid,
 and pressed on the part with the hands. If, notwithstanding
 it continues to bleed, he directs repeatedly applying fresh lint,
 dipped in vinegar. When it resists these remedies, he advises two
 ligatures to be applied to the wounded part of the vessel, and
 then to cut, or divide the portion between them?

Notwithstanding this hint of using the ligatures, neither
 Belus himself, nor his successors, seem to have taken any ad-
 vantage of their use; for they all resorted to styptics, or
 charotics, and the actual cautery.

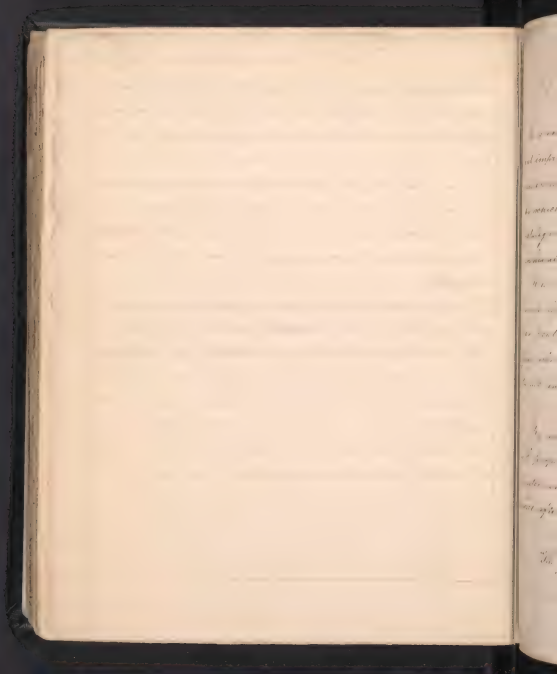
The Liguiriquet was not known in practice, till past
 the middle of the seventeenth century.

The double incision, in the operation of amputation, was
 unknown till Cheselden performed it; unless it be supposed that

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believe had some idea of it when he says "after cutting the incision
near the bone the flesh should be reflected, and detached un-
derneath with a scalpel, in order to denude a portion of the
bone. The latter is then to be divided as near as possible to the heal-
ing point which remains adherent." The operation as performed
in this case, was not completely successful, for the retraction of
the integuments was such, as sometimes to leave the bone bare.
In remedy this Mr. Sharp proposed the crop-ditch but with-
out effect.

Freytag was the first who attempted to extract the calculus,
about the close of the seventeenth century. M. David of
Paris was the first who communicated the new method to
the public. Many others have since been called to perform it, yet
the principles remain the same, and improvements in the way of ac-
cilitating the operation are of a secondary state. But there are some
new. The one now looks into the urethra with the best of reason
the ancient, with the same state of the science.



1. The Present Improved State of Physic.

It is not without frequent celebration & admiration, the present improved state of physic, and we cannot avoid a just & reasonable admiration of the numerous discoveries and improvements which have been made in it, by which the miseries of mankind have been abridged, the catalogue of incurables abridged, and death often been baffled in his attempts upon a human life.

It is in the best states that we witness glowing gleams of an enlightened view in every part of the world to our sick and contumacious, which also that the pathology of the yellow fever, which has defied the tropical climates has been ascertained, and its treatment rendered rational and successful.

By attending to its precursory signs, and meeting them with proper prophylactics, we see pulmonary consumption prevented, and by the use of proper remedies, some forms of it cured, after its symptoms are completely developed.

The gout has been torn from its ancient sanctuary

* Book

in error and prejudice; and we now see its acute paroxysms
 yield to cathartics, blood-letting, a dose or two of Eau de laurier
 or aromatic tincture of Valerian Nutcrust, and gentle
 Staphosolids.

Hydrocephalus internus, cynanche trachealis, and
cholera infantum, which formerly proved so fatal to
 children, are now successfully treated: the two former by
 copious venesection, emetics and cathartics; and the last, by
 moderate blood-letting, mercurial purges, laudanum
 mild astringents, and counter-irritation.

Toute and convulsing spasmodic pains of the head,
 which, under an idea of their originating in an affection
 of the facial nerves, were treated, per noster, per noster
 cut, now yield to the continued use of opium.

Parasitic diseases are now promoted by fire in any
 of the cavities in the injured parts, and "compelling
 them to depopulate the whole system by a local disease". This
 disease has arisen from other causes than worms,
 opium, wine and other diffusible, and permanent stimuli,
 often affect a cure.

* *Book's Title*

Death from drinking cold water in the heated state of the body is now avoided by frequently wetting the hands or the feet, with the water, to free the system from some of its superabundant caloric and when this precaution is even neglected the disease induced by it is generally cured by large doses of liquid laudanum, or other diffusible stimulant.

In consequence of this branch being treated by well ascertained means, with firm partition takes place much less frequent than formerly.

By copious blood letting the pains of parturition are relieved, and the birth facilitated, when from rigidity of the os tincæ the uterus either does not contract, or contracts in vain. In some is accomplished by the use of the weak anæsthetic when the contractions of the uterus are impeded from want of energy. The uterine fibres the cervix and os uteri as well as the external parts, become sufficiently relaxed to discharge the contents.

It is not more than possible that the root was not at all known before it came into our country, and certainly it is not native. It is in some histories treated much more fully than it is in ours, and there is a fine wood engraving of it in the history of the plant, as we call it, more than forty years ago. The only author I have met with is mentioned in a German work entitled "Historia Botanica," published at Leipzig in 1750.

Under the article Decuss the author says "a schwarzen Kern, einen oder zwey kleinen Augen das eigentliche der Mutter."

the use of the ergot, till lately was unknown to accouchement,
and so was the present success of venesection. +

Puerperal fever is prevented by regulating the diet, diet,
and the quantity of circulating fluids, and cured by the
use of the lancet, laxatives, gentle diaphoretics and fomen-
tation.

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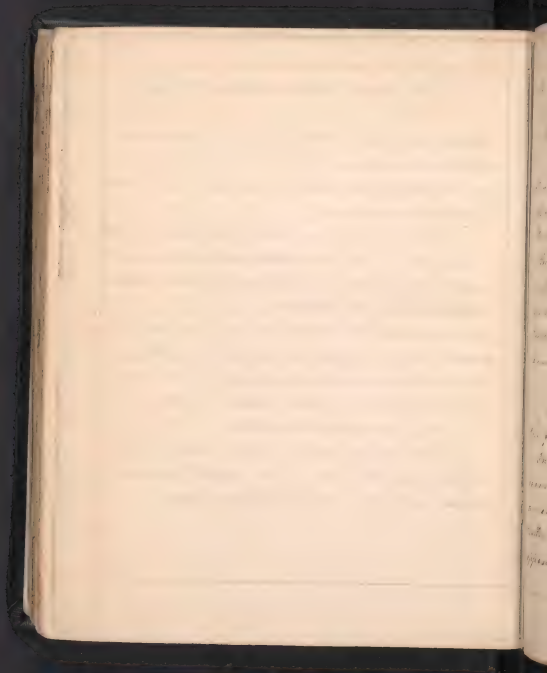
(Of the Present Improved State of Surgery.

Since I greatly exceed the limits prescribed to this dissertation, were I to notice all the improvements in surgery, to pass of them, however, are too important to register one in silence.

External aneurisms, which once proved as fatal as internal ones, are now treated with great success by obliterating the cavity of the vessel for some distance above and below the dilatation.

Herniae, which the old surgeons very imperfectly understood, are now successfully managed, since the discoveries and improvements of Baron, Gimbernat, Hey, and especially those of Wm. C. Cooper, and Mr. Lawrence, were communicated to the public.

Hæmorrhage which used to be treated by nostringing and the cautery, is now stopped by compression, or ligature of the bleeding vessels.



The treatment of the injuries of the head, is much improved, since the publications of Le Fran, Pott and Bernier have been read.

The subject of inflammation, and the healing of wounds, is now much better understood, since we have received the productions of Mr. Hunter and Mr. Keen.

And in the United States every branch of surgery is better understood, and the practice more successful, since the publication of that most excellent treatise "The Elements of Surgery" by the late ingenious (but now lamented) Dr. J. D. Osier of this University.

Among the numerous American improvements the following may be enumerated.

In cases of blindness from a partial opacity of the cornea, or from the closure of the natural pupil, a new pupil is made: and where the cornea is partially opaque the opening through the iris is formed opposite to any part, which retains its transparency.

*Though the use of blisters in erysipelas was known to Ambrose Paré,

2000.

The cure of fractures is now accelerated by blood-letting and where the union of the broken bone has not taken place from a defect of bony matter it is retarded by the inflammation caused by jagging a seton between the fractured ends of the bone instead of exposing the cavity by an incision and cutting off the ends of the fragments which has been attempted, and sometimes unsuccessfully performed, by European surgeons.

Luxations, which have long resisted both force and art, are now reduced in a few minutes and without pain, by bleeding ad deliquium in anemic.

Chronic and indolent ulcers are speedily cured by destroying their surfaces and consequently placing them in the condition of some fresh recent accident.

Erysipelas or rising external mastigo-cutaneous eruptions, by the application of blisters to the affected part.

Ischuria is cured by the addition of a piece of a bagie to a flexible catheter; and strictures in the urethra are removed by means of a caustic; also, in a more expeditious way, by dividing them with a lancet, by which the puncturing of the bladder is, in most cases (prevented) superseded.

Of late we have seen the leathern ligatures introduced into practice, in aneurismal operations, amputations, and for the suppression of hemorrhage from accidental wounds, by which the sufferings of the patient have been abridged, and the healing of the parts facilitated.

For the introduction of several of these remedies, and for the discovery and improvement of others, we are indebted to Dr. Physick, professor of surgery in this University. But they form only a few of the many contributions, by which he has enriched every branch of medicine.

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When we take a retrospective view of our science for seventy years back, and compare it with the present improved, and improving state, how bright are our prospects in contemplating the many acquisitions which will be realized for the same period to come. Viewing it in this light, who can tell but that the present century may close, by striking off the last, from the opprobrious catalogue, of incurable diseases.

Finis.

It is not a secret that I have been
very much interested in the
study of the history of the
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See note.